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385]

[386]

TO EARL GREY, ON THE CONDUCT OF THE REGENT, AND THE PROSPECTS OF PARTY.

MY LORD,

A passage in a report of your lordship's speech, in the House of Lords, upon Lord Boringdon's motion, which passage I will notice more particularly by-and-by, has suggested to me, that it might be useful to submit to you some observations upon the ferment which has been excited by the recent Measures of the Prince Regent, and upon the Prospects of Party; this, therefore, I shall do, in the hope of producing a somewhat more rational way of thinking upon these matters than, at this moment, appears to prevail.

The conduct of the Prince in keeping his present ministers has been censured with all the bitterness of disappointed ambition; all the resources of talent seem to have been brought forth against him; a man, I believe, more severely satirized never appeared before the public. That he has disappointed the hopes of many is certain; and, that it is *my opinion*, that he has not done what the public good required, I need not say, it being my well-known persuasion, that nothing can save England from utter ruin but a total *change of system*, which, of course, implies a total change of *men*.

But, my lord, while *the people* have good ground of complaint; while they may well despair at seeing the "*new era*" commence without any act or circumstance to warrant the hope of a change of that system, which has brought them into their present state; I cannot, for my part, see the justice of the complaints of *the party*, to whom the Prince has, upon this occasion, caused so much disappointment. It may be very safe for some persons to speak of his conduct in such terms as they have spoken of it in the public prints; but, for me, my expressions are known to be too faithful a delineation of my sentiments, and those sentiments are too well

known to be no more than the foundation of what I only want the power to turn into *actions*; in short, I am too well known to be *in earnest*, to make it prudent for me to take the liberty, in a case like this, even to state, as the subject of comment, that which others unreservedly assert.

Enough, however, may be said for the purposes which I have in view. The Prince is charged with many things; his conduct is placed in every point of view calculated to exhibit it to disadvantage; it is made to assume all sorts of hideous forms; but, after all, it amounts, with regard to *party*, to no more than this: THAT HE HAS ABANDONED HIS FORMER POLITICAL PRINCIPLES. The talk about *former friends* is nothing but talk. Besides, that it argues a system of mere *favouritism*. The charge, to make it a charge of any weight, must be, *an abandonment of political principles*; and, this is the charge, which, in all manner of ways, under all shapes and forms, has been preferred against him. Let us, therefore, look a little more closely into this charge, and see whether it be just.

It has been no where, that I have seen, explicitly stated *what those principles are*, which the Prince is said to have abandoned. They are called the *principles of Mr. Fox*; but, those, who so call them, would do well to explain to us what those principles were; or, rather, *which* of Mr. Fox's principles are meant. The principles he maintained when on the side of Lord North before the American war, at which time I remember a speech of his in support of Ex-Officio Informations; the principles he maintained during the American war against Lord North; the principles he maintained in conjunction with Lord North after the American war; the principles he maintained during the Anti-jacobin war against Lord Grenville and in the present war against Lord Sidmouth; or, the principles he maintained when he came into office with both of those Lords at once. Those who accuse the Prince of having abandoned Mr. Fox's principles should point out to us *which set of principles* they mean.

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It is however, fair to presume, that they mean the principles which Mr. Fox professed *at last*, when he was in place, and, of course had the power of *acting* as well as of professing; and, as the complaint against the Prince, is, that he has kept in the present ministers instead of removing them to make way for you and your party, the charge of having *abandoned his principles* implies, that he would *not* have abandoned them *if he had taken your party in*; it implies, that, in your party, the good old principles of the Prince were to be found; and that, in choosing the present ministers he has necessarily changed his good old principles for bad new principles. This, my lord, is the fair interpretation of the charge brought by your party against the Prince, and this charge is not, as I think I shall clearly shew, founded in truth.

As to what *personal promises* the Prince may have made to your party, of these I know nothing. That is an affair between him and those to whom the promises were made. But, I cannot perceive, that, by choosing the present set of men for his ministers in preference to you and your late colleagues, he has abandoned, or shewn a disposition to abandon, any *public principle*; for, I am quite unable to discover *any difference whatever* between the principle of the two parties, if I am to judge of their principles from their words and actions. And, if those whom the Prince has chosen, act upon the very same principles as those whom he has left, how can it be said that he has, by this choice, *abandoned his principles*? To come to particulars, what is the principle that he has abandoned in choosing Mr. Perceval for his minister? Is it the principle upon which Mr. Fox maintained (as lord Arden and Mr. Perceval have done since) that a sinecure office is *a freehold*? Is it the principle which actuated those who obtained an act of parliament to enable Lord Grenville to hold a sinecure of 4,000*l.* a year along with a place of 6,000*l.*? Is it the principle which dictated the putting of the Chief Judge into the Cabinet? Is it the principle which induced the Foxites to make the people pay the debts of Pitt; and to vote him a funeral and a monument, at the people's expence, on account of his "public services," when those Foxites had, for twenty years, represented him as the deadly foe of the country? Is it the principle upon which a bill was brought in

for augmenting the number of German Troops from 10,000 to 16,000 men, and for screening all those who had advised such augmentation to be illegally made? Is it the principle upon which Lord Grenville declared that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire; and upon which Mr. Fox stated in his dispatches, that he should advise the king never to consent to any peace, in which the restoration of Hanover should not be provided for? Is it the principle upon which Lord Grenville became the author of the *Sedition Bills*; or that upon which your Lordship and Mr. Fox and Lord Erskine and the rest of your party, in spite of all your pledges, thought proper to let remain in force those most daring of all the many blows against the rights and liberties of the people? Is it the principle upon which the Income Tax was raised from 6*1/4* to 10 per centum by those very men who had, a hundred times, declared it to be a tax essentially odious and tyrannical? Is it the principle upon which, while the burdens of *the people* were thus augmented, *the king* was, for the first time, exempted from paying any tax at all upon *his immense private property*? To cut short the list (for I might go on thus for a week), is it the principle which bound your lordship's lips in silence upon the subject of that parliamentary reform, which you and your colleagues had so often represented as absolutely necessary to the safety of the country? Is it the principle upon which Mr. Ponsonby acted, when he screened Mr. Perceval from inquiry upon the ground of the acts alledged against him by Mr. Maddocks being as "notorious as the sun at noon day?"

Is it of having abandoned *these principles*, or any one of them, that the Prince is accused? Is it contended, that Mr. Perceval is hostile to principles like these? No man will, I think, venture upon such a task. Upon what then, does your lordship *differ* with Mr. Perceval as to any thing that can be called *principle*? The *Catholic Question*? If this be asserted, let it be borne in mind, that, when in power, *you and your colleagues abandoned the Catholics*; for, though you had brought the Bill for their relief into the House of Commons, you *withdrew it*, and were *willing to retain your places without being permitted to carry the measure*. Nay, since that time, you have refused to support the measure uncoupled with the *Veto*, to which the Catholics do not, and will not, agree. So

that, really, I think it would be very difficult to shew how the Prince has *abandoned any principle* (even as regards the Catholics) in preferring Mr. Perceval and his colleagues to the members of the late ministry. If the Prince has, at any time, promised to grant the prayer of the Catholics, whenever in his power; and, if he does not grant that prayer, when it is in his power, he will be guilty of a breach of promise, and I am sure that I shall be amongst the last to wish to see his conduct defended, or to see an excuse made for it; but, I should still say, that, if he were to make the relief of the Catholics yield to his own convenience, he would have the example of the late ministry to keep him in countenance; for, they, having brought in a bill for the “*emancipation*” of the Catholics; nay, my lord, it was *you* who brought in that bill; having brought in that bill, which was stated to be *absolutely necessary to the tranquillity of Ireland*; having brought it in and had it read a first time, you *withdrew it*, and that too, as it was distinctly stated by your own party, *because it was found to be displeasing to the king*; that is to say, because it was found to endanger your places; for, the people will always bear in mind, that *it was not the insisting upon this measure that put you out*, but the *refusing to sign a promise never to propose the same measure at any future time*. You were ready to abandon the measure of *emancipation for an indefinite period*; but, you refused to sign the promise never to revive it; and, indeed, well you might; for, if that promise had been signed, your tenure of office could not have been worth a day’s purchase. I am very much deceived if this “*most thinking people*” will not soon learn the TRUE HISTORY of the change of ministry that I am now referring to, when they will, I imagine, perceive, that “*Catholic Emancipation*,” as it is called, had nothing at all to do with the matter; but, at any rate, they already know, that this question was, by the last ministry, made to bend to the desire of retaining power; and, therefore, in making it yield to any purposes of his own, the Prince cannot be said to have *abandoned the principles of that ministry*.

To convince us, that, in preferring Mr. Perceval, the Prince has abandoned any public principle, it must be shown that the principles of the persons he has quitted differ from those of the persons he has chosen; and this, I am persuaded, cannot be shown. Mr. Perceval was supported

by the Opposition when Mr. Maddocks made the charge against him *respecting the seats in parliament*. Upon that important point the two parties were perfectly well agreed. They agree equally well upon the subject of *Sinecures and Pensions*. They have nothing to reproach each other with as to the expenditure of the *Droits of Admiralty*. Both have been liberal in their additional grants to the several branches of the Royal Family. Both dissolved the parliament soon after they came into power, though the regular period was in neither case nearly arrived. Neither has taken any measure for *reducing the amount of the taxes*. The one began and the other followed up the issuing of the *Orders in Council*. The war in Sicily originated with one party and has been continued by the other. And, as to the war in the Peninsula, though the late ministry could not begin it, and though they have partially blamed the mode of conducting it, they have never condemned the principle of fighting for *Ferdinand and the Inquisition*, while, upon many occasions, they have distinctly disclaimed a wish to see our troops withdrawn.

In nothing material, therefore, that I can see, do the principles of the two parties differ; and, if their principles be the same, or nearly the same, as to all matters affecting the people, it would be extreme folly in the people to join in this out-cry against the Prince, and to look upon him as having abandoned his principles merely because he has preferred the party in power to the party out of power. All the writers who keep up this cry lend their hand towards deceiving the people, who are thereby drawn off from the objects to which their attention ought to be riveted; namely, *the manner in which the taxes are expended, and the means of obtaining a parliamentary reform*.

I now come to the passage, in the report of your Lordship’s speech, mentioned at the outset of my letter. It relates to that *secret influence*, which has been so much talked of. The words, as they stand in the report, are as follows:—“*There was one point, his Lordship said, on which he had to make a few observations, and a point in his estimation of paramount importance. He alluded to the existence of an unseen and separate influence behind the throne. An influence of this kind had too long prevailed, not less incompatible with the constitution, than with the best interests of the coun-*

"try. An influence of this *odious character*, leading to consequences the most pestilent and disgusting, it would be the duty of parliament to *brand by some signal mark of condemnation*. It was his rooted and unalterable principle, a principle in which those with whom he had the honour to act fully participated, *not to accept of office without coming to an understanding with Parliament for the abolition of this destructive influence.*" I have, my Lord, heard talk of this *influence* for a great many years; but I never could understand what it meant. I have never heard it intelligibly described; and I have never been able to meet with any one who was qualified to give me any thing like a correct idea of it.

What, then, my lord, is this *invisible thing, behind the throne*, which is so *destructive*? To treat it seriously, what can it mean but this, that the King, or Regent, has some persons about him, whose advice he follows in preference to that of his ministers; and, that the ministers are mere understrappers in the hands of these secret and unseen advisers. This is possible; but whose fault is it, if such an influence prevail? Certainly the fault of the ministers themselves, who condescend to fill their offices upon such terms. There would, therefore, be no need of any *understanding with the parliament* upon the subject; for, your Lordship would only have to refuse to submit to such an influence; when, of course, the influence would cease, or you would cease to be a minister.

All this complaining about unseen influence, about this state witchcraft, arises from one sole cause, *the want of a reform in the House of Commons*. If that measure were once adopted, we should hear no more of these complaints; because then, if the King listened to advice that was "destructive," the Commons would refuse to put the people's money into such hands. This is the *constitutional* check. There is no other. A King has as much right to have his private friends as any other person; but, with a House of Commons such as a reform would produce, the counsels of those private friends could never do any harm. It is the influence of the *Borough-mongers*, my Lord, which is so "destructive;" that is the influence which the people of this country dread, and with good reason, for they most sorely feel its effects in the enormous taxes which they have to pay, and in the consequent misery that pervades the country.

Your Lordship complains, that the measure of "Catholic Emancipation" is not adopted. And *why* is it not? It is useless to blame the ministers or even the Prince Regent. The fault, if any, is in *the House of Commons*; for, if that House were to tack the measure to a *money bill*, the measure, if the House persisted, must go down. This was the way, in which measures were formerly carried; this is a way in which the House might carry them now; and, if it resort not to such means, the reason is, that it does not choose to do it; or, in other words, that it does not approve of the measure. If, therefore, the House of Commons be a fair representation of the people, and stand in need of no reform, it is clear, that your Lordship's opinions, as to this matter, are *contrary to those of the people*. And, indeed, if the House of Commons be what is here supposed, we must take it for granted, that a very great majority of the nation approve of the choice that the Prince has now made; that is to say, that they approve of his having rejected your party; for, the minister has unquestionably a very great majority in that House.

To me nothing appears more inconsistent than the blame, which some persons are bestowing upon the Minister for having moved a *call of the House* for the discussion of the Catholic Petition, which motion has been described as setting up a *cry of no-popery*. This seems to me a very strange accusation. There are 658 members; all *representatives* of the people; all recently declared to be "a full, free and fair representation of the people." Not a man of your Lordship's party dissented from this declaration. Well, then, this being the case, a call of the House, an assemblage of all the members, appears to be the fairest possible proceeding; and yet the minister is blamed by some persons for moving for that call. His language to your party is this: "You agree with me, "that the members of this House are a "free, full, and fair representation of the "people; and, as we wish, upon the approaching occasion, to decide agreeably "to the voice of the people, let us have "all the members present." Nothing can be fairer than this; nothing more frank; nothing more honest, upon the supposition that the members are what they are declared to be; and if they are not, the blame rests with all those who joined in, or who did not dissent from, the above declaration.

When we take this view of the matter nothing appears more ridiculous than those complaints that we hear about the *weakness* of the ministry, and those wishes we hear expressed, to see a “*strong government*,” as the cant of the day is. Strong government! There are few people, I believe, who do not find the government sufficiently strong for them; few who do not find it sufficiently sharp-sighted, long-armed, and hard-fisted. For my part, I am sick of hearing my brother journalists bawling out for a “*strong government*.” I have found it quite strong enough, and so will they, I dare say, in their turn. The strength of a government may be shown in two ways: towards the people under it, and towards foreign nations. Ours shows great vigour in the former way; whether it will prove vigorous enough in the latter remains to be seen. But, at any rate, what has the parliament to do with forming a ministry? It is for the king to choose his ministers, and for the parliament to grant or refuse money; and, I cannot help thinking, that all attempts to dictate to the king in the choosing of his ministry are very far indeed from the plain sense and reason of the English constitution. It is for the king to have for his advisers those persons in whom *he* has the most confidence. All the *combinations of great families* to force advisers on the king are unnatural and unjust; yet this was, it is well known, a favourite idea of Mr. Fox, who regarded this as the only means of obtaining a sufficient check on the royal authority. But, in truth, this notion arose out of the want of a check in a House of Commons. The nobility had deprived *the people* of all power, and then saw no way of checking the crown but that of combining amongst themselves. The crown, however, has now, by the means of these long wars, and the consequent millions of taxes which it has to distribute in various ways, become too powerful for any such combinations; and, your lordship may be well assured, that, let the Prince choose whom he will for his minister, yea even the most disliked of those who may be, perhaps, alluded to as the unseen advisers behind the throne, that minister, with from eighty to a hundred millions annually to expend, will be able to set any combination of wealth, birth, and talents at defiance, until the day, if ever that day comes, when we shall see a *reformed House of Commons*.

To see what we now see in the composition of the ministry is very humiliating to family pride; but, family pride may thank itself for its humiliation. The nobility supported Pitt in his war against the Republicans of France, *in order to prevent a reform of parliament in England*. Whoever takes an impartial view of the history of 1791, 2, and 3, must be convinced of the truth of this assertion. The several Political Societies in this kingdom asked for nothing more than a parliamentary reform: and, as you, my Lord, well remember, their voice, which was loud and was becoming very general throughout the country, was stifled by the war against France. The measure of prevention succeeded; the *Reformers* were silenced, great numbers of them ruined, and many of them destroyed. But, the means of prevention, that is, *the war*, has led to what the great families did not, in all probability, foresee; it has led to the collection and distribution of from eighty to a hundred millions of taxes annually; it has converted great part of their estates into funds out of which has grown a description of persons nearly as powerful as themselves; which, together with the creation of so immense a military and naval patronage, have enabled the minister of the Crown to set them all at defiance. They may now, perhaps, begin to think, that it would have been better if they had admitted *the people* to a share in the government, instead of making war upon Republicans and Levellers, and answering political writers with Royal Proclamations. Yes, my lord, the famous *Addressers* of 1792, may now, perhaps, begin to think, that if they had yielded a little to the people at that time, the evils and the dangers which they now complain of would never have existed.

The same cause which has placed power in the hands of Mr. Perceval will, in my opinion, keep it there as long as the Prince shall choose. The wish expressed by Lord Erskine, namely, to see Lord Wellesley and other *men of great talents* (as he was pleased to express it) *uniting together*; this wish, in spite of myself, forced a smile from me. His Lordship, who has been accustomed to witness the power of eloquence, does not seem to perceive what it is that his men “*of great talents*” would have to unite against. The Taxes raised last year (exclusive of Ireland) amounted to *74 millions of pounds*, and the loans *13 millions*, making together

87 millions of pounds. Take in Ireland and the amount is about 100 *millions of pounds*. Now, the Minister, whoever he may be, has all this money to expend, except what goes to the payment of interest of the Debt. He has the *distribution* of it. The *bare collection of the taxes* amounted last year to £ 2,934,876. That is to say, *exclusive of Ireland*. Here, then, are nearly *three millions of money* (equal to the whole of the revenue in the reign of Queen Anne) swallowed up by the *tax-gatherers* alone, besides the immense sums which they obtain by *surcharges*, and which are not brought to account. These tax-gatherers are chosen by the minister; or, in other words, he gives these three millions a year to whomsoever he pleases. Can any "*union of talents*" make impression upon a power like this? And this power is possessed by any man, whom the Prince chooses to make his minister.

The Army, the Navy, and the *Ordinance*, cost little short of *50 millions a year*. The pay of the soldiers and sailors take about 8 millions of this. The rest goes to the *Commissioned Officers*, to *Contractors*, and to persons in various Offices, to have any thing to do in any of which is more or less of a favour. There are in the Army and Navy not less than about *Twenty five thousand Commissioned Officers*, all of whom are dependent upon the minister of the day, or, if not upon him, upon the King himself. Why, this branch alone is sufficient to make any minister irresistible in a country of such narrow population. But, if we take in the *Commissaries* and all the retainers to the army; the *Contractors*; the innumerable multitudes that depend on the navy; if we do this, we shall see in a moment, that whoever the King chooses to make his minister, no matter who or what he may be, will be too powerful for any combination of Lord Erskine's "*men of great talents*."

In short, there is scarcely a single family in the whole kingdom, who pretend to what is called genteel life, who do not feel some degree of dependence, either direct or indirect, upon the government. Who is there that has not a father, a brother, a son, a nephew, or a cousin, who has a commission in the Army or the Navy, or who is in some Public Office, or in the Customs or Excise, or who is some way or other dependant upon the government for bread; aye, for the very bread that they put in their mouths; for the very means of sustaining life? The money paid

for the collection of taxes alone (and that only in Great Britain) is sufficient to maintain *Seventy Three Thousand Families* at 40s. a family, or 15s. a week all the year round; and these, as I said before, hold their bread at the mercy of the government. *Seventy three thousand families* is no trifle in a population like ours; and, if we take in all the families made dependent through the means of the army and navy including the colonies, we shall find the chain of dependence nearly as complete as that of nature itself.

Nor must we forget the *law*, a profession which is become almost as dependent as the military or the naval. The government, having taken to itself so large a portion of all the property in the nation, that is to say, of all the earnings and incomes of the people, has, of course, the employing of a proportionate part of the lawyers. What it has to bestow in this way is immense. In the *Excise*, in the *Customs*, in the *Tax Offices*, in the *Army*, in the *Navy*, its plaints and defences are endless. In short it has all the law-business arising out of an estate of from 80 to 100 millions a year, received in various ways, and, I believe, it has more law custom to give than all the individuals in the country put together, besides the numerous *Commissions* which it is continually creating, and in all of which there is sure to be at least one lawyer. So that, now, people send their sons to study the law, not so much with a view of enabling them to rise by the exercise of their talents, as with that of fitting them for a place under the government, towards which the whole crowd of young *Barristers* are constantly looking for employment.

To every profession, to every situation in life, where the object is *to live without labour*, or *to gain more than intrinsic talents will fetch in the open market*, this dependence extends. The government is become the universal patron and employer in all callings where men get their bread without hard labour or study, and, of course every one who does not possess extraordinary powers or extraordinary spirit, becomes a dependent; and these callings are now become so extensive, they occupy so many persons, that the wonder is, that there should be found in the whole country one single man, without a considerable fortune, with courage enough to open his lips in opposition to men in power.

Here, my lord, is the main source of

the power of such men as we have, of late years, seen in the capacity of Ministers. It is impossible to look at even the slight sketch that I have here drawn without being convinced, that whoever the king chooses to make his minister, will be minister as long as the king pleases, in spite of any combinations of great families. And, as I before observed, for this the great families have to thank themselves. The war, which they called for, which they applauded and supported, against the Republicans of France, lest the people of England should obtain a reform of parliament, has put all this power into the hands of the Crown, and, of course, into the hands of any minister whom the Crown chooses to appoint. In 1792, the year before the war was commenced, the money raised in Great Britain amounted only to about 15 millions of pounds sterling, 9 millions of which went to pay the interest on the Debt, leaving the Crown only 6 millions to expend upon the army, navy, &c. Now the Debt costs 35 millions annually, leaving the Crown about 60 millions to expend upon army, navy, and in various other ways. So that, besides the weight formed against the great families by 26 millions of additional interest to the Debt, here are about 50 millions a year thrown into the hands of the crown to enable it, amongst other things, to destroy the influence of those families. This is what the great families have got by their war against the Republicans of France and the Reformers of England.

But, besides this cause of the duration of Mr. Perceval's power, there are others which would be of no trifling importance if this all-pervading cause did not exist. He is well known to be of the *true Pitt school*; whereas your party is suspected of harbouring some designs respecting a retrenchment of the public expences. I see no reason for this, certainly; but the long list of dependents have their fears upon this score. Some of the indiscreet young men, who have been regarded as belonging to your party, have let fall expressions that have excited alarm; and, the truth is, that the people now in power are the favourites of all those who live, or wish to live, on the public money. The people now in power never even talk about reform or retrenchment, two terrible words in the ears of all dependents.

The present Minister has, too, the cordial support of the *Bank* and *East India House* and all their numerous retainers;

and these two establishments are altogether as hostile to your party. They know well what the state of the paper-money is; they know that any attempt to compel the payment of Bank Notes in specie would hasten the catastrophe; and, as they gain every day more and more, they want the catastrophe to be deferred to the latest possible period. They find Mr. Perceval ready to do this; and, therefore, they prefer him to your lordship. He talks of no *patching* and *restoring*. He takes the paper as he finds it, and he plainly says, that he will keep it going as long as he can. Does your lordship think, that a minister who will make Bank Notes a *legal tender* will not be preferred by the issuers of those notes, to a minister who talks of making those issuers *pay their notes in cash*?

Next, Mr. Perceval has the *fundholders* clearly on his side; for, though his measures tend to reduce the value of their property, though his wars, his loans, his exchequer bills, and his legal tenders will assuredly wind up their concerns for them as effectually as any of the projects of your party; still, they like Mr. Perceval best. He talks a comforting language to them; he talks of the *undoubted credit* of the Bank, whose notes he is, it is supposed, about to *compel people to take*, or to go unpaid; he talks of *protecting* the fundholder, and words are enough to satisfy the mass of the people. There is, in short, a general persuasion, that your party wished to do something that would endanger the Bank, that would tend to produce a national bankruptcy; and, there is, on the other hand, a general persuasion, that Mr. Perceval is opposed to any such measure: This of itself would be a rock of adamant to him for a while. Your Lordship may talk and I may write about the inevitable consequence of the making of Bank Paper a legal tender; we may show as clearly as daylight, that, from the moment it is made a legal tender, the fate of all the fundholders is irrevocably sealed; but, Mr. Perceval, who, I dare say, sees all this as clearly as you and I do, will smile at our efforts, well knowing, that while it is the interest of so many persons that our opinions should be false, they will not fail to believe them so.

On the subject of *peace*, too, some of your party have, at times, let fall sentiments that must tend to give alarm to the dependent part of the nation. That this alarm is groundless, I confess, it being im-

possible to obtain peace upon any terms that your party would propose; but, the *talk*, the very mention of peace excites apprehension. In one way and another there are not less, I should suppose, than A HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND FAMILIES WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE CONTINUATION OF THE WAR. You never hear the word *peace* drop from Mr. Perceval's lips, except to mark his disapprobation of the conduct of those who seem to wish for it. No, my lord, the way to obtain or to preserve power, at this time, is to be decidedly for *war* and *expenditure* and *paper money*.

What, then, *is to be done?* I have pointed out what would have prevented that of which you now complain; but, that is past? What is to be done to get rid of this fearful power? What, in short, is now to be done, to put Mr. Perceval out of his place? OBTAIN A REFORM OF PARLIAMENT. Nothing short of that. Without that, he, in my opinion, will be minister (if he has life) 'till the one pound Bank note will not purchase *four quartern loaves*. I hardly think that the system would support itself farther than that point, when the annual taxes would amount to about 200 millions of pounds sterling; but, I am decidedly of opinion, that, without a reform of the Commons' House of Parliament, Mr. Perceval will continue minister, till the Bank Note comes to the point that I have mentioned; and, though he might be ousted by that circumstance, it does not follow, that your party would take his place; but, on the contrary, it appears to me certain that they would not. There would, in that case, arise quite a new scene, quite a new state of things, the events to be expected from which I shall not presume to anticipate.

If I am asked *how* a reform of parliament is to be obtained, I answer, by the great families joining with the people, joining not with the *dependent* part of the community, not with those who have a direct and known interest in war and taxation, not with those who look to the government for support; but with that great mass, by whose industry, ingenuity, and œconomy the nation is sustained; that great mass of the people who are now silent for the want of somebody to encourage them to open their mouths, but whose voice, if once heard, would not fail to be attended to. That such a junction as this will take place I am not sanguine enough

to hope; but, on the other hand, I have no scruple to predict, that by no other means (except the means of the Bank Note) will the power of Mr. Perceval be either destroyed or diminished as long as the Prince shall give him his countenance.

As I do not believe that the great families will join the people in calling for a reform; or, in other words, as I do not believe, that they will *give up* (for that is the real point) *that which they withhold from the people*, I must hope, that they will not obtain power; I must hope, that Mr. Perceval will not only continue minister, but that his opponents will daily feel the effects of his increasing strength; I must hope that those opponents will never be able to persuade any portion of the people, that a change of ministry would answer any purpose other than that of enriching a new set of placemen at the public expence.

I am, &c. &c.

WM. COBBETT.

*State Prison, Newgate,
Wednesday, 25th March, 1812.*

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PRINCESS OF WALES.—A discussion, which took place in the House of Commons on the 23rd instant, upon the subject of a pecuniary allowance to the Princess of Wales, merits the attention of the public. Indeed, it is a subject, as far as I know, that may be connected with very important events, considering the times in which we live; considering the state of the Bank Notes and the power of the Emperor Napoleon. If there be any one of my readers who does not perceive what the "*Delicate Investigation*" has to do with these circumstances in our situation internal and external, I must leave him to be enlightened by *time*, not choosing, for the present, to express myself more fully upon this particular point.—Of the matter that I am now about to touch upon, few people, comparatively speaking, understand any thing at all. I will make it as plain as I can, or, rather, as I dare; and, in order so to do, I will begin by explaining who the Princess of Wales is.—She is a daughter of the ever-memorable *Duke of Brunswick*, who commanded the Prussian army in the *invasion of Holland* in 1787 and in the *invasion of France* in 1792, and who was driven from his own dominions by Napoleon in 1806, having first received a wound of which he soon

afterwards expired. The mother of the Princess of Wales is the present Duchess of Brunswick, who is a sister of our king, and who is now in this country. Consequently, the Princess of Wales is a first cousin of her Royal Husband. They were married in 1795, and their only child, the Princess Charlotte of Wales, was born in January 1796. The Prince of Wales is now in the 50th year of his age, and the Princess is now in the 44th year of her age.—The Duke of Brunswick was a Sovereign Prince in Germany, who had an army of his own, and who, during the American war, hired a considerable number of his troops to our king to be sent to reduce the Americans to obedience.—That the resources of the Duke were pretty considerable appears from the stipulations of the treaty, by which those troops were hired to us, and for whose services a considerable sum of money was paid out of the taxes raised in this country.—But now these resources no longer exist. The young Duke of Brunswick, heir to the late Duke and brother to the Princess of Wales, is now in our service, and in England. He has a foreign corps in our service, of which he is the Chief, and he has, besides, been made a *Lieutenant-general* in our service; and, moreover, he has, exclusive of all his military pay and emoluments, a *pension* of 7,000 pounds a year, while the Duchess, his mother, has a pension of 10,000 pounds a year; which sums, the reader will observe, are not paid out of the money allowed to the Royal Family, but they make a clear addition of so much raised upon the people.—There is something in the present state of this family, compared to their former state, well calculated to engage the reflections of the moralist as well as of the historian and politician. In the early part of the American war, we have seen the late duke lending our king assistance against the Americans; in 1787, we have seen him, at the head of a powerful army, invading Holland and marching in support of the Prince of Orange against the republicans of that country; in 1792, we have seen him, at the head of an army of the same nation and still more powerful, invading France, marching to the support of the king, and menacing with all sorts of punishments, those of the people of France who should dare to oppose, or, indeed, dare not to aid him; and (what a contrast!) we have seen, in 1806, his own territories invaded by the French, the

army under him, (the same with which he invaded France) totally defeated by the French, his dominions taken from him, himself mortally wounded, refused a resting place in his palace, and after having expired on the frontiers, his very body refused a place in the vault of his ancestors, while his family were compelled to seek support in a foreign land.—A contrast more striking has seldom been seen in the world; and, when one meets with any thing that leads to it, one can hardly refrain from pointing it out.—Having now a pretty clear notion of the persons we are talking about, we will now come to the matter immediately before us.—There was, on the 23d instant, a motion made, in the House of Commons, in consequence of a Message, or request, from the Regent, to grant a large sum of money annually to the four Princesses who are not married. They having hitherto made a part of their father's family; it was, of course, not necessary to allow them any thing for a separate establishment. Nor, indeed, does it very clearly appear how it was necessary now, even supposing them to be about to form separate establishments; for, one would suppose, that their father's establishment would, in that case cost less, and their establishments might be paid out of his.—But, the fact is, that the Regent sent a Message to the House, proposing a new grant of money for his sisters; and, on the 23d instant, Mr. Perceval brought forward the proposition in the shape of a motion for granting 9,000 pounds a year to each. Here is a sum of 36,000 pounds; a "*mere trifle*," courtiers will say; a drop in the sea. Drop as it is, however, it is sufficient to support more than 900 *families of labouring people* at 15s. a week for each family, and each family containing 5 persons, will make the whole number 4,500 persons. Let no one call it a *drop*, then; for it is a sum of great consequence, and one that it becomes us to look well at.—However, such it was, and such was the purpose for which it was demanded.—The Queen, too, observe, is to have an *addition* to what she formerly had, making her allowance 58,000 pounds a year, though one would have thought, that, if her daughters were about to have separate establishments, she would, of course, want *less* instead of more than she had before.—The Princes had all been provided for by former grants; and, as to the Prince, he now takes the Civil List, of amount enormous, into his disposal. So

that, in this season of new grants and new establishments, every one seems to have come in for something, except the *Princess of Wales*.—Now, let us inquire a little into the cause of this.—It is a fact pretty well known, that the Prince and Princess do not choose to live under the same roof, and that they have not chosen to do it for a good many years. The reasons for this some persons have pretended to state; but they vary so widely according to the partialities of the relators, that one does not know what to believe. The fact, however, is undoubted and notorious, “notorious as the sun at noon day;” and now for another preliminary fact, which is not quite so notorious, I mean that of *an investigation into the conduct of the Princess* having taken place in the year 1806.—The reader, who has an opportunity of looking back into the Political Register for that year, will find a series of Articles under the head of “*Delicate Investigation*,” whence he will perceive, that there was, according to the accounts given in the newspapers, especially the *Morning Post* (late Mr. Benjafield’s), an Investigation going on in consequence of information given by some persons relative to the conduct of the Princess of Wales; he will find, that that paper (whether truly or falsely) talked of “some trifling levities” that had come to light, but averred at the same time, that the Princess had been, by the persons appointed to investigate, acquitted of all the charges brought against her; he will find, that the *Morning Post* announced, that two gentlemen at the bar had been employed by the Princess to draw a report of the matter, which would *speedily be published*; he will find, that, by me, the *Morning Post* was laughed at, and was frequently called on for the *promised publication*.—Thus the thing went off late in 1806 and early in 1807, when, in the month of March, all of a sudden, *the ministry was changed*; Mr. Perceval came into place; not another word was said about the *intended publication*. But, very shortly afterwards, mysterious advertisements appeared in the news-papers, offering large sums for a certain *BOOK*. It is pretty well known, that this “*Book*” related to the “*Delicate Investigation*;” and, it is also pretty well known, that many thousands of pounds have been expended in purchasing up a very few stray copies of this extraordinary performance.—This trade of the *Book* has been going on from March 1807 to this time; and, it

is understood, that two or three copies of the delicious work are yet extant, in spite of the large sums that have been offered for them. The *Book* is understood to have been printed by a confidential printer; but, it is not easy to prevent copies from escaping; and, at any rate, it was not effected upon this occasion; for some copies did get out.—Until now the *Book* has never been mentioned in parliament, at which I have often wondered. There is, however, “*a time for all things*,” and this appears to be the time for bringing out the history of the *Book*. By-and-by we shall see, that the time will come for bringing out the *Book* itself, when, I imagine, that this “*most thinking people*” will really begin to think that they have never thought before.—Having said thus much in the way of preface, I will now insert the part of the debate which related to this mysterious matter, reserving a few observations to follow.—**Mr. CREEVEY** began by expressing his wish to know the reason why the *Princess of Wales* had been overlooked in this general dispensation of establishments. To this Mr. Perceval answered, that the Prince had some time ago, paid her debts, out of his own allowance, to the amount of 49,000*l.* and that she now had her 5,000*l.* pin money, and 17,000*l.* more, making 22,000*l.*—To this **MR. WHITBREAD** replied: “that, when the Right Hon. Gent. talked of his Royal Highness taking upon himself the payment of debts to the amount of 49,000*l.* could it be forgotten, that his Royal Highness was enormously in debt himself? He, indeed, who could not pay his own debts, engaged to pay those of another:—this looked very like a juggle.”—**MR. TIERNEY** followed, and said, that he “was somewhat surprised, that in the course of these new provisions there should have been no mention made of the *Princess of Wales*, the immediate and actual wife of the Prince who was now vested with the whole authority, and performing all the duties of the King. Various reports were in circulation: he had heard A SEPARATION was to take place, but he knew nothing of it. The Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Perceval) no doubt was well informed of every circumstance, for HE HAD FORMERLY BEEN OF COUNSEL FOR HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, and knew all the merits of the case, though he now thought proper to preserve an entire silence on the subject. He (Mr.

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"Tierney) could only say, that there was "at present a person in this country, who, "from her situation in it, represented the "Queen, as much as the Prince represents "the King, *and who in the present circum- stances is taken no notice of whatever.* He "thought, therefore, the subject should be "postponed." — Mr. WM. SMITH was of the same opinion. — Then the HON. MR. BENNETT rose, and said, "that he hoped, "that the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. PERCEVAL) would inform the House why "no mention had been made of the Princess of Wales, at a time when increased "grants were to be voted for the other "branches of the Royal Family. Perhaps "there was no man living who could inform the House better on that subject. "Perhaps there was no one so capable of letting out the *secret* connected with "what was called "the delicate investigation." — Why is she now, as wife of the Prince Regent, not to have the *same state, the same drawing-rooms, and the same splendour, as the wife of the King?* What is there that has happened which makes "it improper that she should appear in the "station of a Queen at a time that her husband performs the functions of royalty, "and represents the person of the King? "Every body had heard a good deal about "BOOKS that were to have been published, "and libels that were suppressed. Now there "certainly must be considerable information in some quarter or other about these "matters, and as the Right Hon. Gentleman had been long the confidential adviser and counsellor of her Royal Highness, he hoped that he would not now "desert his friend in her *utmost need*, but "that he would state what was the reason "for her being so neglected and passed "by upon this occasion. As for himself, "he did not feel disposed to vote another "shilling until the corrupt expenditure of "the public money was restrained, and the "necessary retrenchments made, both as "to sinecures and other branches of the "public expences." — To this Mr. PERCEVAL answered, that, "as to all the questions which had been put to him on the subject of "the delicate investigation," he should SAY NOTHING. He did not "think, that either as Minister or in any "other capacity, he was bound to give any "answer upon this point." — This called up Mr. WHITBREAD a second time, who observed, that "there was a time, when "the Right Hon. Gentleman not only "thought it not inconsistent with his duty

"to give information on the subject of "the delicate investigation," but when "he took every pains to spread this information as generally as possible. At that time A BOOK was prepared, which was intended to be circulated most extensively, both here and upon the Continent. [Mark this, reader!] The book, however, had been suppressed, and the outstanding copies had been bought up at a great expence, out of some fund or other, WHETHER PRIVATE OR PUBLIC HE COULD NOT SAY. He could not conceive why the Right Hon. Gentleman now remained mute, when before he had A THOUSAND TONGUES. As to the real income of the Queen, it was 58,000*l.* per annum while she lived principally on the establishment of the King; whereas the Princess of Wales, the consort of the Prince Regent, has only 22,000*l.* per annum, and is obliged to live entirely at her own expence. All that the nation knows of her residence is, that she lives in retirement somewhere, either at Kensington or Blackheath. This was certainly not the situation in which the country would wish to see the wife of the Prince Regent placed, or in which they considered that she ought to be placed. At a time that additional grants were made for the other branches of the Royal Family, it was natural to ask, WHY HAD SHE BEEN SO NEGLECTED? He, therefore, much wished that the present Committee should be postponed for a month, to give time to the Committee appointed for enquiring into the expenditure of the Civil List to make their report, in order that the House might see whether savings might not be made in the expenditure of the Civil List, which would be abundantly sufficient to provide a proper allowance not only for the other Princesses, but for the Princess of Wales also." — MR. BARHAM next spoke upon the subject, and said, "he wished to put some questions to the Right Hon. Gentleman, not as the confidential adviser of the Prince or his consort, but as the Minister of this country. He wished to ask him in that capacity, WHY he had recommended an additional grant for the Princesses, and had entirely overlooked the person who was so much nearer to the Throne than they were. He asked this question on public grounds, and he asked it of the Right Hon. Gentleman, not as the adviser of

“ the Prince, but as the minister of the country. He called upon the Right Hon. Gentleman to state why no additional splendour was to be attached to the Princess of Wales, THE WIFE of the Prince Regent.—MR. PERCEVAL was silent!—MR. TIERNEY said, that if the Right Hon. Gentleman persisted in his silence, he would take it for consent. He supposed, then, that he SANTED THE SEPARATION between the Prince and the Princess. (No, no, *from the ministerial benches!*) Well, well! said Mr. T. I am glad they will SAY NO TO THIS. It must be recollected that the Princess Regent had now no more than 5,000*l.* a year secured to her. The remaining 17,000*l.* was purely from the bounty of her husband, which might be withdrawn to-morrow morning. Ought she not to be made independent as well as the other branches of the Royal Family? (No, no, from some members on the ministerial bench.) Did they say no to that also? If there was any REASON why she should not be made independent, the reason ought to be stated. If they could PROVE ANY THING AGAINST HER CREDIT, they should take even that away from her; but if they could not, there was no reason why she should not be maintained suitably to her rank in the state. If the King were to die to-morrow, and she was to come to the throne, what would the Right Hon. Gentleman then do? Would there be no provision made for her similar to that which had been made for other Queens of England? In the peculiar situation that the Right Hon. Gentleman had stood; first as Counsellor to the Princess, and now as Minister and adviser to the Prince, there was no man capable of giving more information to the House. He wished to know why he had cast off one client to take a brief from another? He really thought that he was bound, both to the country and his own character, to give some explanation.”—This was sharp work. It was pinching very close. What Mr. PERCEVAL said in reply deserves the greatest attention; for we shall have to remember these words a long while.—MR. PERCEVAL said, “ that as for what he was bound to do from regard to the country and his own character, he should ALWAYS JUDGE FOR HIMSELF. He should, however, say thus far, that neither in his capacity of Counsellor to

her Royal Highness, nor in any other character whatever, had he any charge against her Royal Highness, or the means of bringing forward any charge, and that he never meant to cast the slightest reflection upon her. As to the subject of this discussion, he had no delegated authority; no commands to propose an additional grant for the Princess of Wales. Nevertheless, if he could collect that it was the sense of Parliament, that such additional provision should be made, he made no doubt but that he would shortly be fully authorised to propose it.”—That is to say, the Prince would, he supposed, authorise him to ask the Parliament for more money, he would very readily come and ask for it. Thank you as much as if you did! This is, indeed, a pretty story. These gentlemen ask the reason, why the Princess, why the wife of the Prince, why the mother of the heiress to the throne, why the Princess Regent; they ask THE REASON why this lady is not suitably provided for as well as the sisters of the Regent; and the Minister of the Regent says: “ I shall give you no reason; but, if you have a mind to give her some money, I have no doubt, that I shall very soon be authorized to ask for it.” This is charming!—But to proceed: “ MR. TIERNEY said, “ that it was now when grants were making for all other branches of the Royal Family, that a proposal for an increased establishment of the Princess of Wales might be expected. But the Right Honourable Gentleman now gives the House to understand, that if they absolutely will have it so, why then he will abate something of his dignity, and comply with their desire so far as to recommend it. But did not he know pretty well, that it would have been necessary for him to recommend it first, and then that he might pretty well depend on the sense of Parliament? He now said, that he was not authorised,—that he had no commands to bring forward such a measure. That was saying, in other words, that he had not advised such a measure. He was glad, however, to have heard him state distinctly that HE KNEW NO CHARGE AGAINST HER ROYAL HIGHNESS AS PRINCESS OF WALES.—MR. WHITBREAD said, that it was no great concession to say, that if such was the general sense of Parliament, the Right Hon. Gentleman would acquiesce. He thought, however, that the House had gained a most important

confession, when he who had been the Counsellor of her Royal Highness, and is now the Minister of the Prince Regent, **ALLOWS THAT NO IMPUTATION WHATEVER RESTS ON THE PRINCESS OF WALES.** Certainly, there was a time when that Right Hon. Gentleman thought that she had been unjustly stigmatised, and was preparing a book, to be published to all Europe, in vindication of the Princess. He was happy, however, now to find, that he thought no vindication necessary. He was astonished, however, that when the Right Hon. Gentleman thought proper to consult so many Lords of the Bed-chamber, and Grooms of the Stole, for his Majesty, who have no other visible business but to inform his subjects as to the state of his health, (which by the bye, is now only done once a month) he should not have thought it as much for the dignity of the throne, that a person so near to it should be supported in proper splendour. He was convinced, that if he could look narrowly at the expenditure of the Civil List, abundant means would be found for this purpose."—**MR. PERCEVAL**, in explanation, said, that from no information which **HE** had received, either as Counsellor to her Royal Highness or in any other capacity, could he collect any thing which would make A PROPER CHARGE against her Royal Highness."—Here this most curious discussion closed; but, in all probability, only to be opened another time with more interest.—There is a *mystery*, to get at the bottom of which is, at present, no easy matter. That the whole will be developed, before a great many months have passed over our heads, I have, for my part, very little doubt; and then, **JOHN BULL**, who affects to laugh at other nations, will see what a figure he himself will cut.—However, in waiting for this developement (which, mind I say it, *will come*), let us consider a little what is to be collected from the above debate.—It appears, then, that there has been a something called an *Investigation into the conduct of the Princess of Wales*; that Mr. Perceval was one of her counsellors, if not her only counsellor; and that he had prepared a book to be published upon the subject. He is now asked, whether he has any charge to bring against her; or whether he knows of any charge against her. To which he answers in the negative. From the report of his words (which report may be not very

correct) he would appear to have qualified this negative towards the close of the debate; but, still he did give the question a negative.—This being the case; he, the minister, *knowing of no charge against the Regent's Wife*, it may well seem strange, that he should not have advised the Regent to make a suitable provision for that wife, who does not live with him, and especially when it is well known, that a great separate and independent establishment has always been allowed to the Queen, though she lived with her husband.—As to the *real cause* of the Royal Pair living in separate mansions, that we will not inquire into; but, we have it now from the lips of the minister himself; we have it from the lips of the Regent's chosen minister, that there is not, to his knowledge, any grounds for a charge of misconduct against the Princess; and, this being the case, *why* has she not an establishment; *why* does she not keep a court; *why* is she not to be put upon a footing suitable to the office now filled by *her husband*?—If there be any charge; if there be any ground for accusation; if the Princess has done any thing that would render it improper for her to hold a court, or live in state in the country; then, indeed, the case would be different; and a Prince, bearing in mind the force of examples of purity, would, of course, take his measures accordingly. But, we have it now, from the lips of the Regent's own confidential adviser; we have it from the lips of the Regent's chosen minister, that there is no charge against the Princess; and that, in fact, he, though very well acquainted with all that passed at the time alluded to, knows of nothing that can constitute a charge against her.—This is very strange, while we behold the Royal Pair living apart, and while we hear members of parliament talking of A SEPARATION, as, we see, Mr. TIERNEY did, though he said he had only heard it rumoured. Really, as there is NO CHARGE against the Regent's wife, it is to be hoped, that her Royal spouse graciously intends her speedy return to Carlton House, and that this is the reason why no separate establishment is proposed for her. And this would make loving John Bull so happy! He would be so pleased to see the Royal Pair living like a pair of turtle doves! He would almost forget his taxes for an hour or two. The worst of it is, that John would be so proud, he would strut about and look so big, and would vomit out such braggings about it. We

should hear nothing come out of his beef-head but odes and sonnets on the reconciliation. The world would be inundated with his sentimental slabber.—However, we must wait a little to see how things will go. We must have a little patience, and we shall get at the whole story. It must come out; and, mind I say it again, COME OUT IT WILL, in spite of all the purchasing up of copies. There is one copy (as I have heard) that no minister can reach. IT WILL COME OUT, I say for the third time.—In the mean while, it is amusing to observe the language of the news-papers of the two parties. The MORNING CHRONICLE now calls aloud for a *developement* of this affair, and the Morning Post talks of the *delicacy* due to the Royal Parties. Just as if it were not more dangerous to talk in this way, than to make the exposure at once. The Morning Post reproaches the Morning Chronicle with calling out for exposure *now*, when, until now, it said not a word *about* the matter. Very true; but, until now there has been nothing that called for it. It was not till now, that it became necessary for the Princess of Wales to *hold a court*. That is the point, and, it therefore now becomes right to inquire into the REASONS for her not being put in a state to hold a court. The Queen used to hold her courts, and WHY is not the Princess to hold hers? The Queen, as wife of the king, held her court, and WHY is not the Princess, as wife of the Regent, to hold her court? There is no answering this, without stating some REASON; and, what is that reason, what can that reason be, if, as Mr. Perceval tells us, there is NO CHARGE WHATSOEVER existing against the Princess?—However, again I say, *patience!* If we have patience, we shall hear the whole story out. Books may be bought up, and printers and publishers may be terrified; but, I say it once more, the story, be it what it will, WILL COME OUT! And with this, for the present, I conclude my remarks upon this ear-tickling subject.

W^m. COBBETT.

*State Prison, Newgate, Friday,
26th March, 1812.*

LIVERY OF LONDON.

I have no room to do any thing but merely insert the following Resolutions, which have had the honour of being abused by the most base of all our base news-papers, THE TIMES.

In a Meeting or Assembly of the MAYOR, ALDERMEN, and LIVERYMEN of the several Companies of the City of London, in Common Hall assembled, at the Guild-hall of the said City, on Thursday, 26th day of March, 1812.

Resolved—1. That we have long seen and felt, with the deepest concern and anxiety, the prevalence* and baneful effects of a corrupt and unconstitutional influence in the administration of the Government, equally dangerous to the honour and independence of the Crown, and to the liberty and happiness of the people.

2. That among other pernicious effects of this system, the public resources have been dissipated in wild and disgraceful projects, in numerous frauds and peculations, in useless places, pensions, sinecures, and reversions, and in expensive establishments, having no apparent object but the increase of Ministerial patronage, creating an oppressive and overwhelming weight of taxation, rendered doubly grievous by the inquisitorial and arbitrary mode of its exaction.

3. That we have seen a delusive and factitious paper currency substituted in place of the valid coin of the realm, and the pernicious progress of measures and laws designed to give a forced value to such unnatural currency, evidently indicating the approaching confusion of the public finances, and the ruin of the public creditors.

4. That under the protection of a corrupt influence, which undermines all public spirit and principle, we have witnessed the most shameless and insulting disregard of public opinion, degrading instances of which have been the screening from justice two individuals, who were then and now are ministers of the Crown, and who have been openly charged with corrupt trafficking in Seats in the House of Commons; by the refusal to inquire into the calamitous and disgraceful Expedition to Walcheren; and in the re-appointment of the Duke of York, against the unequivocal sense of the Nation.

5. That we have long suffered under an impolitic and ruinous system of restrictions on commerce, which, by an unhappy policy, have converted the impotent threats of the enemy into a substantial injury, and to which is to be attributed the almost general ruin of our Merchants, and the starving and wretched condition of the population of the manufacturing districts, who, driven to despair, claim

relief in a change of system, instead of an extension of our already sanguinary penal code.

6. That we have seen foreign mercenaries introduced into our armies, and placed in command over Englishmen, at a time in which a great portion of our fellow subjects are denied a participation of the very privileges which these Foreigners enjoy.

7. That we have for a series of years made many earnest representations of our grievances by Petitions to the Throne, and to both Houses of Parliament, none of which have yet been redressed; on the contrary, we observe an increased determination to resist inquiry, to protect abuses, and to screen from punishment public delinquents and open violators of the Law and the Constitution, while the Right of Petitioning and the free access to the Throne, secured by the Bill of Rights, have been denied to the People, and the public Press has been either corrupted or persecuted.

8. That these, and all other oppressions and grievances, are solely to be attributed to the corrupt and inadequate state of the Representation of the People.

9. That from the avowed hostility of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent to the system so long pursued, and from a reliance on his own declarations, we patiently bore with these grievances, looking forward with anxious solicitude to the period, when his Royal Highness should accede to the full and unrestricted exercise of his powers, as the dawn of a new era, when it was expected those radical changes would have been effected, which the feelings and sufferings of the People, and the actual state of the Empire, so imperiously demanded.

10. That it was with no less grief than astonishment we learnt that, notwithstanding the pledges which had been given, his Royal Highness had determined to continue those Ministers in office, whose malversations and corruptions had been rendered as notorious as the sun at noon-day—who had uniformly evinced a total disregard of all public principle—and whose practices had been chiefly directed to the corruption of Parliament, and their own aggrandizement—thereby extending and confirming that hateful system which had entailed so many miseries on the Country.

11. That the continuance of such Ministers in the service of the Crown and of the Public, destitute as they are of the smallest claim to support on any public principle, can be attributed only to the

most disgraceful intrigues, and to the pernicious influence of a despicable Faction behind the Throne—afflicting to a loyal and intelligent People, and portentous to the welfare of the Empire.

12. That an humble and dutiful Address and Petition be presented to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, representing our numerous grievances, and praying that his Royal Highness will be pleased to dismiss his present evil advisers, and to call such men, and such men only, into the public service as stand pledged to his Royal Highness and the Country, to devote their exertions in effecting the salutary reformations which are so imperiously required—to correct those abuses and corruptions which have taken root in every department of the State—and to accomplish that radical and effectual reform in the House of Commons which shall make it truly speak the independent and loyal feelings of the People, rather than remain the convenient engine of the sinister views and corrupt measures of any Minister for the time being.

The Address and Petition to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent was read and agreed to.

Resolved—That the Address and Petition be signed by the Town Clerk.

Resolved—That the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs, and a Deputation of 21 Liverymen, attended by the Recorder and City Officers, be desired to present the said Address to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

Resolved—That the Sheriffs, attended by the Remembrancer, do wait upon his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, to know his will and pleasure when he will be pleased to receive the said Address.

Resolved—That the Representatives of this City in Parliament be instructed to support the principles of the said Address and Petition in their places in parliament.

Resolved—That the Thanks of this Common Hall be given to Mr. Alderman Combe, for his upright and independent conduct in Parliament, as one of the Representatives of this City.

Resolved—That the Thanks of this Common Hall be given to Messrs. Robert Waithman and Mr. Samuel Favel, the Mover and Seconder of the Resolutions.

Resol. Unanimously—That the Thanks of this Common Hall be given to the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor, for his impartial conduct in the Chair this day.

WOODTHORPE.

T. N. WILLIAMS, Clerk, Common Hall.

BANK NOTES.

Debate in the House of Commons, on the 17th of March 1812, on a motion of MR. PERCEVAL for bringing in a Bill to protect persons offering payment in Bank Notes.

(Continued from p. 384.)

..... In Belfast, from which place the Petition had been presented, gold was the usual payment; and it became the House to see whether the contracts which the Petitioners now wished, should be satisfied by payments in Bank Notes, had not been made to pay in gold; and, of course, whether complying with their desire would not be to enact that they should pay less than they had agreed for. His Lordship contended there was no pretence for renewing the Bill of last Session. The original pretext for it, was, that gold was rising in price. That was not now the case; on the contrary, it had been falling for some time. The Bill too had been futile, and the only effect it had produced, was to cause a disappearance of change universally throughout the kingdom. Nothing was easier than to evade the provisions of the Bill as it stood, so far as the purchase or sale of guineas was sought to be prevented. It was only first to change your Bank of England Notes for Country Bankers' Notes, and then they might be exchanged for guineas without even the imputation of offence. Only one conviction had taken place under the Act, and that was a person who had been seduced to commit the offence by a person sent on purpose from Bow-street Office. He hoped, however, the House would pause before it came to the improvement now proposed, by which Bank Notes were to be made a legal tender.

LORD CASTLEREAGH could see but little in what had fallen from the Noble Lord, except in as far as the House was given to understand that the Noble Lord adhered to his former opinion. He rose at present principally to correct two mistakes into which the Noble Lord had fallen. The Noble Lord was in error, in supposing that he (Lord Castlereagh) had said that this measure was not necessary in Ireland. He had said quite the reverse; but he did not wish it to be extended to Ireland last year, on account of the absence of the greater part of the Irish Members. The

Noble Lord had also misunderstood his Right Honourable Friend (Mr. Perceval), who had expressly declared that he would be for protecting payments in Bank Notes, and that, should it become necessary, in order to do so, to make Bank Notes a Legal Tender, even to that length would he carry it. As to the Noble Lord's idea, that the contracts in Ireland might be to be paid in guineas, he could inform him, they were always stipulated to be made in pounds sterling.

LORD FOLKESTONE explained, that he had a clear recollection on both the points, in which the Noble Lord (Castlereagh) had supposed him to be in error.

MR. TIERNEY rose and observed, that it was very evident from the speech of the Right Honourable Gentleman himself, that the country was already in the situation which had been predicted last session, that was in a situation of moving from bad to worse—[hear, hear!] He asked in what respect did this measure fall short of making Bank Notes a legal tender? The answer was, that they were to be legal tenders only in a Court of Justice. But what law was there which could compel any man to part with his goods or property contrary to his inclination? the fact was, that this Bill went to affect immediately all interests and every class of society—[hear!] If he were to buy 1,000*l.* worth of plate, would he not be perfectly secure in paying for the commodity in Bank Notes? And how then could this Bill be said not to go the full length of making these notes a legal tender? He implored the House to consider well this subject before they came to a decision upon it. Unless he could himself perceive an altered disposition in the House, he should deem all endeavour at argument superfluous and unnecessary. At the same time he had that opinion of the Right Hon. Gentleman's good sense as to believe that he had experienced no small degree of pain in coming to a resolution to submit such a proposition to the House. He knew indeed that the Right Honourable Gentleman dared not meddle with the Bank.—[Hear, hear!] He knew that the Government had proceeded so far, that the Bank had become its masters, and the masters of the finance of the country—[Hear, hear!]

(To be continued.)